

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

UPDATED 2/4/15

1) Is it possible to solicit for partial services of the RFP rather than for all services? If so, how are partial services awarded?

A vendor must be able to provide all of the services in Section B. A vendor can subcontract services which they cannot provide. Vendors are responsible for paying their subcontractor.

2) What do EMQs mean?

“EMQs” are estimated monthly quantities of requested treatment services. EMQs are designed by day, 30 minute increment, or event, depending on the service. Section C outlines this by project code, which is the number that is assigned to a particular treatment service listed in Sections B and C. For example, residential EMQs are based on 30 days of treatment per offender per month, so 150 units is an estimate of the need for providing approximately five USPO/USPSO clients with residential treatment in a particular catchment area per month.

With regard to outpatient treatment, such as individual or group counseling, the EMQs refer to 30 minute increments per service. For example, 2020 group counseling located in Humboldt County is estimated at 12 units per month (which averages one group per week for one client, since most groups are 1.5 hours or “3” units in length).

EMQs for evaluations and medication monitoring are measured by “event”. In other words per evaluation, or per monitoring visit.

Some EMQs are very low. This is due to either a minimum need for the service, or possibly a new service in which we are uncertain of the frequency to be utilized.

EMQs are requested for a three year period because the total duration of the BPA, including the exercise of two 12-month options total a three year period.

Please remember that these are just estimates and do not bind the government to meet these estimates (Section B-1).

3) For therapeutic community/residential treatment, are local and state licenses needed? Does a drug and alcohol license for "beds" in a community meet this criteria? What type of license would a residential facility need?

Vendors must meet state requirements (they differ state to state), so if a vendor has a drug and alcohol license for a number of beds, this most probably meets the states licensing requirement (refer to Section C).

4) Does the contracting vendor have to provide all of the required services or could they outsource services not normally provided within their agency?

The contracting vendor may outsource services. Please refer to Section I-1 (Subcontracting) of the RFP.

5) Do staff working for the vendor have to pass a security clearance? What if some of the staff are ex-offenders (who are not currently on probation or parole)?

Statement of Work (Section C) states that staff is prohibited if currently on probation or parole. If staff have completed the above they are fine.

6) Please delineate the various units of services described in the RFP. Is the unit of service per day? Are the units defined per hour or half hour of service?

For residential, one calendar day is one unit. For counseling, units are defined in half hour increments (one hour is two units). For evaluations and medication monitoring the services are charged by event. Please refer to question #2 of this information sheet.

7) Can male and female defendants/offenders be co-housed in one facility or do they have to be placed in separate male and female facilities?

Male and female offenders can be housed in the one facility, but not in the same room.

8) What is the award start date and notice?

The award start date is October 1, 2015.

9) For the emergency financial assistance - what qualifies as an actual emergency?

An emergency is whatever we deem it to be (a local decision). For example, emergency housing/shelter, payment of an electricity bill (one time) in order to prevent disconnection of service.

10) How do I fill out the RFP correctly and what are the requirements?

We cannot assist in preparing the RFP. The requirements for services provided are listed in Section C, which is the Statement of Work. The instruction for submission of the RFP are outlined in Section L.

11) Is it technically acceptable for a vendor to insert a copy of their brochure and other documents outlining the program in place of the narrative statement outlined in Section J? The instructions say that additional information can be attached along with the typed or handwritten narrative.

Yes, the vendor can submit brochures as part of their proposal. Generally, this is not a replacement for the narrative statement required as it won't answer all the government's technical questions. Probation will have to review the brochure to determine to what extent it does demonstrate the vendor to be

technically acceptable.

12) Does a vendor with a large staff need to include resumes for all staff, or can they simply list staff names and qualifications in regard to staff qualifications in Section J (last contract cycle, this vendor was told to include resumes)?

Yes, we need resumes for all staff who will work directly with federal offenders, in any capacity. Section L-4 and L(Attachment C) provides the instructions on what is required in regards to staff qualifications. Vendors must comply with that requirement for staff working directly with federal offenders and through any arrangement, to include teaming.

13) What do the asterisks and checked services mean in Section B?

The checked items are services we require. The checked services with an asterisk are identified as local services and are detailed in our Local Services located after page 50 in Section C.

14) Does the program discharge form refer only to federal clients?

Yes, it refers to federal clients.

15) We received an RFP for both long and short term residential (2001, 2002) (6001, 6002). Should we submit separate RFPs?

No.

16) Which sections of the RFP should we return?

Section L of the RFP provides a detailed outline for submission of a completed RFP.

17) Do we need to submit a copy of our building permit?

Yes.

18) Where can we find more information regarding the cognitive groups?

Section C - "Cognitive Behavioral Interventions" provide details regarding cognitive groups.

19) Some clients travel 120 miles to come to counseling. How do we separate counseling from random UAs without creating undue duress for clients?

For some offenders/defendants, the sweat patch is an option. Officers are cognizant of distance and can determine if they want to still want to utilize random UA collection for offenders/defendants.

20) What does "AO" stand for?

The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts in Washington, D.C. (there is a list of terms in Section C, page C-1 through C-3)

21) Where do the people come from to our agency? Are these people released from prison? What is your agency?

We are the United States Probation Office, and United States Pretrial Services Office. U.S. Pretrial Services is a separate agency that piggybacks on the Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) held by U.S. Probation. Defendants released from custody on bond while pending adjudication are supervised by U.S. Pretrial Services. Offenders who have been convicted of federal crimes are either placed on probation directly from court, or supervised by the probation office post incarceration. Such individuals may be on supervised release, mandatory release, parole, or military parole.

22) Is the vendor required to provide drug testing supplies?

No. U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Offices will provide all drug testing supplies, including packaging and mailing costs, with the exception of breathalyzer. Breathalyzers must be approved by USPO/USPSO but provided by the vendor (C-23 through C-24).

23) Can the date for the RFP be extended?

No. The deadline for submission of completed RFP's is final (once determined).

24) What happens to clients who are already receiving services when the contracts expire on September 30, 2015?

Clients who are currently receiving services will transition to treatment providers awarded a Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA), effective October 1, 2015. Treatment specialists will work closely with officers to transition clients as smoothly as possible.

25) Is the cost of drug testing supplies for residential treatment clients the responsibility of the vendor?

Yes. According to Section C Residential Placement (a-1), "the per diem rates include room and board, assessment, counseling/therapeutic services, physical examination and blood and urine collection."

26) The RFP indicates that I have to keep all federal files separate from other client files. Does this mean that I must also separate federal offenders/defendants from non federal clients when providing treatment?

No. You are correct that the RFP requires in Section C - Deliverables: Defendant/Offender Records and Conferences (a.(1)(b), "The vendor shall segregate defendant/offender files from other vendor records. This will facilitate monitoring and promote defendant/offender confidentiality." This separation is required only for the actual treatment files, not the clients

themselves. The vendor, may place federal defendants/offenders in group counseling sessions with other non-federal clients. For example, a cognitive-behavioral treatment group of federal offenders and state offenders would be appropriate under this contract. The vendor should, however, check with other contracted agencies to ensure those agencies are in agreement with such a “mixed” group. The vendor would also be cautioned about placing federal offenders/defendants in a group with non-criminal justice clients.

27) Will officers inform our agency about defendants/offenders who are HIV positive or who have been diagnosed with AIDS?

The U.S. Probation Office policy regarding disclosure of HIV to third parties is governed by Guidelines for U.S. Probation and U.S. Pretrial Services Officers Supervising Person Who Have Been Exposed to the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or Who Have Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), as approved by the Judicial Conference Committee on Criminal Law. In short, we are not authorized to disclose HIV/AIDS information without written informed consent by the defendant/offender. (There are some exceptions for custodial situations). In addition, we are bound by state law in this regard. Please remember that universal precautions should be used in all cases.

28) I have never responded to a Request for Proposal (RFP) prepared by U.S. Probation, and am unfamiliar with the pricing. Can I be provided with the current rates that U.S. Probation pays for treatment services?

The rates for current treatment services are a matter of public record and will be posted by separate document on our website.

29) What if I do not have an existing treatment site in a particular catchment area but would be willing to put a program together if awarded the BPA - can I submit an RFP?

No. In order to be found technically acceptable the proposing agency must have an existing program in place by the submission deadline date of the RFP, not the BPA award date.

30) Our agency would like to know the average number of clients receiving treatment services in a particular catchment area. Can this information be released?

In Section B of the RFP you will find a list of estimated monthly quantities (EMQs), for each requested service. Though this is only an estimate, it will provide a more accurate reflection of the treatment service needs in a particular catchment area, as opposed to just providing an average number of clients served.

31) What is “piggybacking?”

The BPA contains language in Section C which allows for Probation and Pretrial Services to utilize services from a vendor on a BPA without going through a competitive process. This process is called “piggybacking.” The Federal Bureau of Prisons also may piggyback off of the same BPA, but has currently elected to procure treatment services separately.

32) What is the average length of stay for defendants/offenders in residential treatment and outpatient treatment?

The length of stay depends on the requested service and the needs of the client. A referral for project code "2001" cannot exceed 90 days unless approved by our Office of Probation and Pretrial Services. However, "2002" can extend up to 270 days. The requesting officer must staff the needs of each case with a specialist and/or contracts administrator to determine the most suitable service for the client.

Traditional outpatient services should be staffed monthly with the probation officer to address current treatment progress, and future treatment needs. Authorization for services must be updated at least quarterly. Again, the length of service depends on the needs of the client.

33) Can MFT interns or PhD. practicum students provide mental health or sex offender counseling services?

For counseling services, yes, although they must be directly supervised by a staff member who is a licensed/certified psychiatrist, psychologist, masters or doctoral level practitioner. For additional guidelines regarding who can perform mental health/sex offense-specific evaluations, psychological testing and treatment, please refer to the staff requirements for each project code.

34) Must sex offender treatment providers be certified through the Association for Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA)?

No. However, they must meet the standards of practice established by his/her state's regulatory board and adhere to the established ethics, standards and practices of state regulatory sex offender management boards (where applicable). The individual shall practice within the generally accepted standards of practice of the individual's mental health profession, adhere to the Code of Ethics published by the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA), and demonstrate competency according to the individual's respective professional standards and conduct all evaluations/treatment in a manner that is consistent with the reasonably accepted standard of practice in the sex offender evaluation/treatment community (see Section C Sex Offense –Specific Treatment For Post Conviction).

35) On the Solicitation Acceptance Form (Section A), line 9, what are the percentages that should go into the boxes? Is there a link/information on how to figure those percentages properly?

The Northern District of California does not require a discount for prompt payment. However, pursuant to Section I-3 RFP, references the clause and that the full text of the clause can be accessed at [www.uscourts.gov/clause 7-140](http://www.uscourts.gov/clause-7-140). (See below for excerpt).

JP3 Clause 7-140, Discounts for Prompt Payment

As prescribed in 7.7.3.e.(2), insert this clause in Section I of solicitations and contracts.

Discounts for Prompt Payment (JAN 2003)

(a) Discounts for prompt payment will not be considered in the evaluation of offers. However, any offered discount will form a part of the award, and will be taken if payment is made within the discount period indicated in the offer by the offeror. As an alternative to offering a discount for prompt payment in conjunction with the offer, offerors awarded contracts may include discounts for prompt payment on individual invoices.

(b) In connection with any discount offered for prompt payment, time will be computed from the date of the invoice. If the contractor has not placed a date on the invoice, the due date will be calculated from the date the designated billing office receives a proper invoice, provided the judiciary annotates such invoice with the date of receipt at the time of receipt. For the purpose of computing the discount earned, payment will be considered to have been made on the date that appears on the payment check or, for an electronic funds transfer, the specified payment date. When the discount date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday when judiciary offices are closed and judiciary business is not expected to be conducted, payment may be made on the following business day.